

Idaho Northern Railroad House  
(Dolores Hill House)  
Broadway & Main Sts.  
Montour  
Gem County  
Idaho

HABS No. ID-45

HABS

ID,

23-MONT,

5A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS  
ID,  
23-MONT,  
5A-IDAHO NORTHERN RAILROAD HOUSE  
(Dolores Hill House)

Location: Southwest corner of Broadway and Main Streets  
Montour, Gem County, Idaho  
UTM: 11/553950/4863225

Present Owner: United States Department of the Interior

Present Occupant: Unoccupied

Present Use: Unused

Statement of Significance: The building is one of two in Montour associated with the Idaho Northern Railroad. In recent years it was a private residence.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of erection: Unknown

Builder and Architect: Unknown

Historical narrative:

This building is one of two in Montour associated with the Idaho Northern Railroad. It was moved to this site in the 1950's, from an earlier track-side location. It may not have been built in Montour: The Emmett Index of 17 July 1913 (1:1-2) has a short account, headlined "Move House on Cars," that described the shipping of "a good sized frame building" on a flatcar to Montour, for "use by the railroad company." Given that the headline specifies a "house," and the subject of this evaluation is known to have been used as living quarters for railroad employees, it is possible, if not proven, that this building was the subject of the 1913 Index article.

The present site of the building was originally the location of one of Montour's small businesses. Frank E. Volkmer purchased this lot in 1914, and opened "Montour Mercantile," a dry-goods store housed in a small front-gable frame building with a false front and center entrance recessed between large display windows. In 1920, Montour Mercantile, the Brown Trading Co. (also of Montour), and Butte Hardware (of Sweet) merged to form the Butte Trading Co., with Harry Sweet as president and

general manager. This coincided with Sweet's move to Montour, and his purchase of the George Adams house soon thereafter (1922). The stock of the Brown Trading Co. was put into the Montour Mercantile store. By 1945 the firm was "defunct," and Harry Sweet sold the store (and perhaps the house) to meet the needs of his creditors.

Bibliography:

Emmett Index: 17 July 1913, 1:1-2; 22 February 1917, 2:1;  
31 Oct. 1918, 3:2; 1 April 1920, 1:1  
Photograph 74-193.22 "Montour-streets," (date c. 1915), on  
file at Idaho State Historical Society, Boise.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

General statement

1. Architectural merit and interest: The building is an example of the conversion of a small, substantially built late nineteenth-century wooden structure to residential use.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.
3. Summary description: One-and-a-half stories, 39'-6" by 24'-6" including porches, rectangular.

Detailed description of exterior

1. Foundations: The foundations are of 8 x 8 x 16 inch concrete block, unpainted, gray, smooth surface. At the back porch the space below the floor is covered with insulation board, indicating that this porch is supported on posts or piers. The foundation is 4 inches high at the front of the house and 8 inches high at the back.
2. Wall construction, finish, materials: The wall is covered with drop siding, 5½ inches exposed, painted white. The base of the wall has a 11½-inch-wide wooden beltcourse which follows all around the house except at the back porch. The corner trim of the walls is made up of two boards 5 inches on each side of the corner and one inch thick. At the base of the corner trim is a plinth 1½ inches high, mitered, and having a sloping upper surface. There is no form at the top of the corner trim to suggest a capital, but instead the trim members are flush with the bands at the top of the walls.
3. Structural system: The house is of wood frame construction with 2 x 6 inch studs at 16 inches on center. The first

story floor framing was not accessible nor evident. The floor of the second story is joists at 16 inches on centers. The roof construction was not accessible nor evident. Partitions are of 2 x 4 inch studs.

4. Porches, stoops, etc.: The front porch extends nearly all the way across the front (east end) of the house. The porch has 5½-inch-square posts with corners chamfered up to within 12 inches of top and bottom. The floor is of ¾-inch-thick matchboards with ¾-inches exposed width. The ceiling is of beaded matchboards with ¾-inch exposure. The rafters are 1 5/8 x 3 5/8 inches at 24 inches on centers. The front parapet is 20 inches high and of the same boards as the ceiling; the side parapet is similar, but the boards are ¾ inches wide, vee-jointed matchboards. Above the parapet is steel insect screening.

The rear (west) porch has been enclosed and insulated, but it appears to have been of similar construction to the front porch. Posts and flooring were visible. The back steps from the porch are of 1½-inch by 9-inch pieces of wood.

5. Chimneys: There is a central chimney penetrating the south slope of the roof, of concrete block, with a red-tile flue lining projecting.
6. Openings, doorways and doors: The front door has flat trim 5½ inches wide at the jambs and 5 5/8 inches high at the head. The head has a cap molding. The door is of wood, 1 3/4 inches thick, and has 3 horizontal panels below a glazed opening. The back door (from house to the rear porch) is similar, as is its frame. The door from the back porch to the exterior matches the interior doors of the house.
7. Openings, windows: Window frames are 5 inches wide at the jambs and 6 inches high at the heads, the heads have a cap molding. Typically, sash are 2/2 (each sash has one vertical muntin). The face of the meeting rail is 15/16 inch high; the face of the vertical muntin is 3/4 inch wide.

The small window of the north wall near the center of the wall is 2/2 sash. The one near the west end of this wall is one sash, apparently the lower sash of the removed west window of the kitchen moved to the new location.

8. Roof, shape, covering: The roof is of gable form with the ridge perpendicular to the front (east end) of the house. The porches have shed roofs. All roofs are shingled.

9. Roof, eaves: The eaves are boxed in with vee-joint matchboards.
10. Roof, dormers, etc.: None.

Detailed description of interior

1. Floor plans: At the first story the house has two rooms in front (east end) and two in back. The living room is in the front on the south, occupying more than half the width of the house. On the north side in front is a smaller room, possibly a bedroom. The stairway is behind this smaller room, accessible from the living room. The rear part of the house contains the kitchen, which is on the north side, and the bathroom, which is a narrow room on the south side.

At the attic story there are two rooms, one in front and one in back. The front one includes the stairway.

2. Stairway: The stairway is enclosed. One enters it by passing through a door from the living room. The stairway fits within a space roughly square in plan. Typical steps have an 8½-inch rise and a 9½-inch run. There are 8 winders. Treads are 1½ inches thick wood. Treads and risers are painted gray.
3. Flooring: At the first-story, there is linoleum in the bathroom and resilient flooring tiles in the kitchen. The two rooms in front have carpet wall to wall.

At the attic story, the flooring is painted matchboards 3-5/16 inches wide.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: In general, the walls and ceilings are finished in plaster with sand-finished or stippled surfaces, painted. At the stairway there is vertical beaded matchboard wall finish with 3¼-inch exposure. In the kitchen there is wainscot of the same material, 48-3/4 inches high. The west wall of the living room had a fairly new embossed wallpaper of imitation brickwork pattern, and a portion of this wall on the livingroom side was seen to be ½-inch gypsum wallboard.
5. Openings, doorways and doors: Door frames are 5-1/8 inches wide at jambs and 5-5/8 inches high at the head. Typical doors are of the four-panel type, two tall vertical panels above two shorter vertical panels, and are 1-3/8 inches thick and 7 feet high. Window frames match door frames. The door to the bathroom is a single-panel door.

6. Interior trim: The typical baseboard is 7 inches high with a quarter-round shoe mold at the bottom and a 1½-inch-high piece of molded trim at the top. The latter might be described as a torus below an inverted, vertically attenuated cyra reversa, all very Victorian in character. In the living room a piece of 2½-inch-high wooden trim replaces the original baseboard.
7. Hardware: The sash hardware are of the type usually found at the meeting rail of double-hung sash, but are larger and follow a simpler pattern; that is, they seem to be sturdier than what would normally be found in domestic use. The typical door hardware includes morticed latchsets. The doorknobs in the living room are faceted glass.
8. Mechanical and electrical equipment: The chimney is centrally placed and has thimbles in various rooms for stove flues, although there was a tall wall panel heater installed in the living room wall. There were no electrical fixtures of interest.

#### Site and surroundings

1. Orientation and general setting: The front of the house faces east to Broadway and the north side faces Main Street and the Farmers' and Stockgrowers' Bank across Main Street. There is a house on the lot adjoining to the south.
2. Historic landscape design: There is evidence of a lawn around the house and some decorative planting.
3. Outbuildings: At the west end of the lot there is a board-and-batten garage with a shed at the back.

At the north side of the house there is a concrete hatch cover 4 feet by 7 feet-6 inches, just outside the kitchen. There are small steel loops embedded in the top of the hatch.

#### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by Dennett, Muessig & Associates, Iowa City, Iowa, in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Region. It fulfills the Bureau of Reclamation's obligations under a memorandum of agreement between the Bureau, the State of Idaho, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR 800. The structure was photographed, measured, and drawn March - September, 1979 by Sarah J. Dennett and Hans Muessig, Project Supervisors; Wesley I. Shank, Project Architectural Historian/Historical Architect, (Iowa State University); Martha H. Bowers, Project Historian; Robert A. Ryan, Project Photographer and Philipp Muessig, Project Assistant.

APPENDIX

CHAIN OF TITLE: IDAHO NORTHERN RAILROAD HOUSE

Description: Lots 16 & 17, Block 7, T7N R1E, Boise Meridian

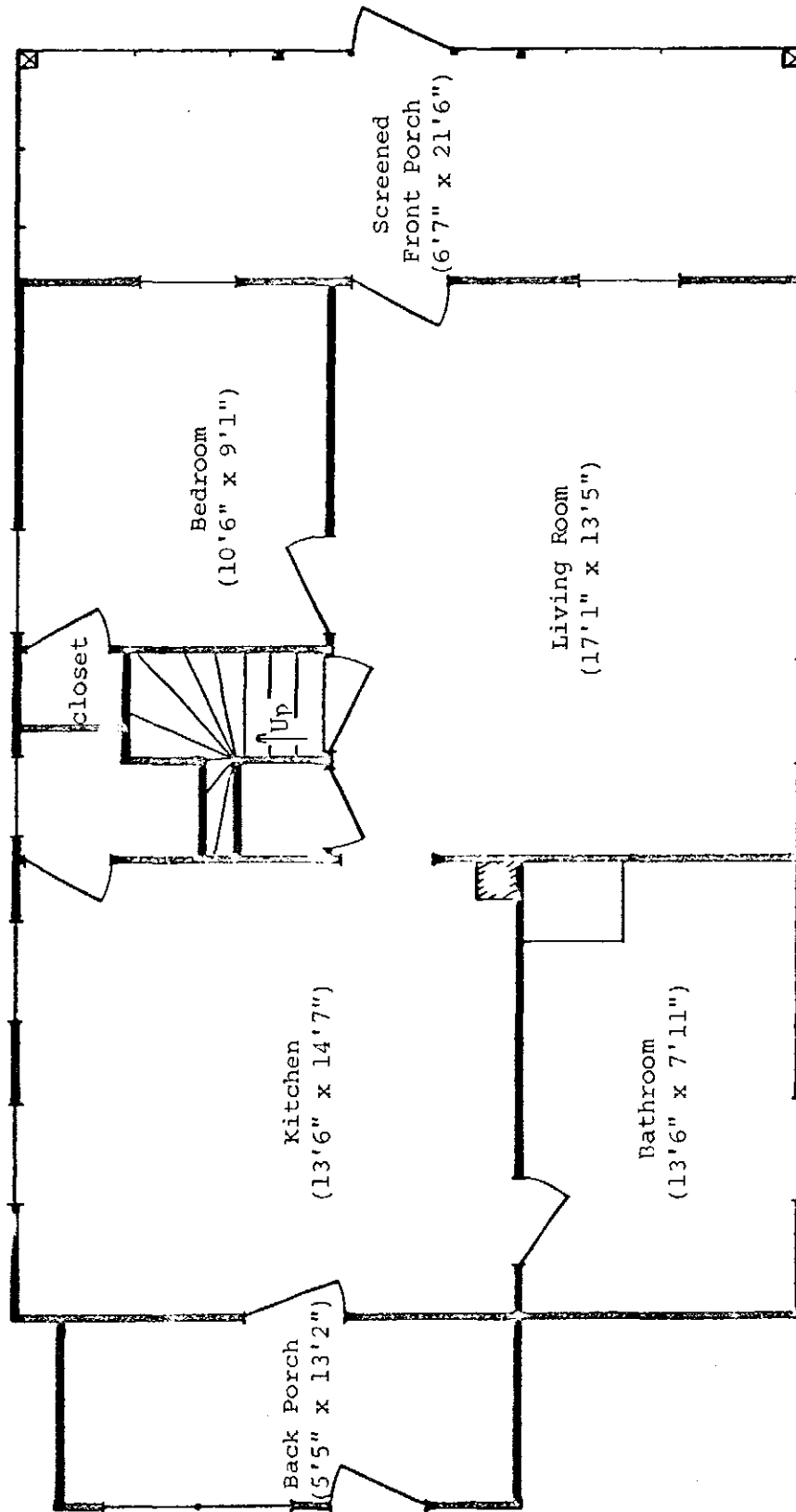
Reference: Recorder's Office, Gem County Courthouse, Emmett, Idaho

- 1914 Deed 31 August 1914  
Recorded 31 March 1915  
Book A. Deeds, p. 206  
E. H. Dewey, Trustee  
to  
Frank E. Volkmer
- 1920 Deed 1 April 1920  
Recorded 12 April 1920  
Book 13 Deeds, p. 400  
Frank E. Volkmer & Martha A. Volkmer  
to  
Butte Trading Co.
- 1945 Bargain & Sale Deed (N. D. ) 1945  
Recorded 2 November 1945  
Book 29 Deeds, p. 500  
R. K. Davis, H. C. Boyer & Thos. McCormick,  
Assignees for the Benefit of Creditors of Butte  
Trading Co., a defunct Idaho Corporation  
to  
Robert E. Lees
- 1945 Bargain and Sale Deed 24 September 1945  
Recorded 2 November 1945  
Book 29 Deeds, p. 501  
Robert E. Lees & Lovell Lees  
to  
H. C. Boyer
- 1947 Bargain and Sale Deed 18 July 1947  
Recorded 5 September 1953  
Book 35 Deeds, Instrument # 68434  
Ople Boyer  
to  
Mrs. E. W. Gifford

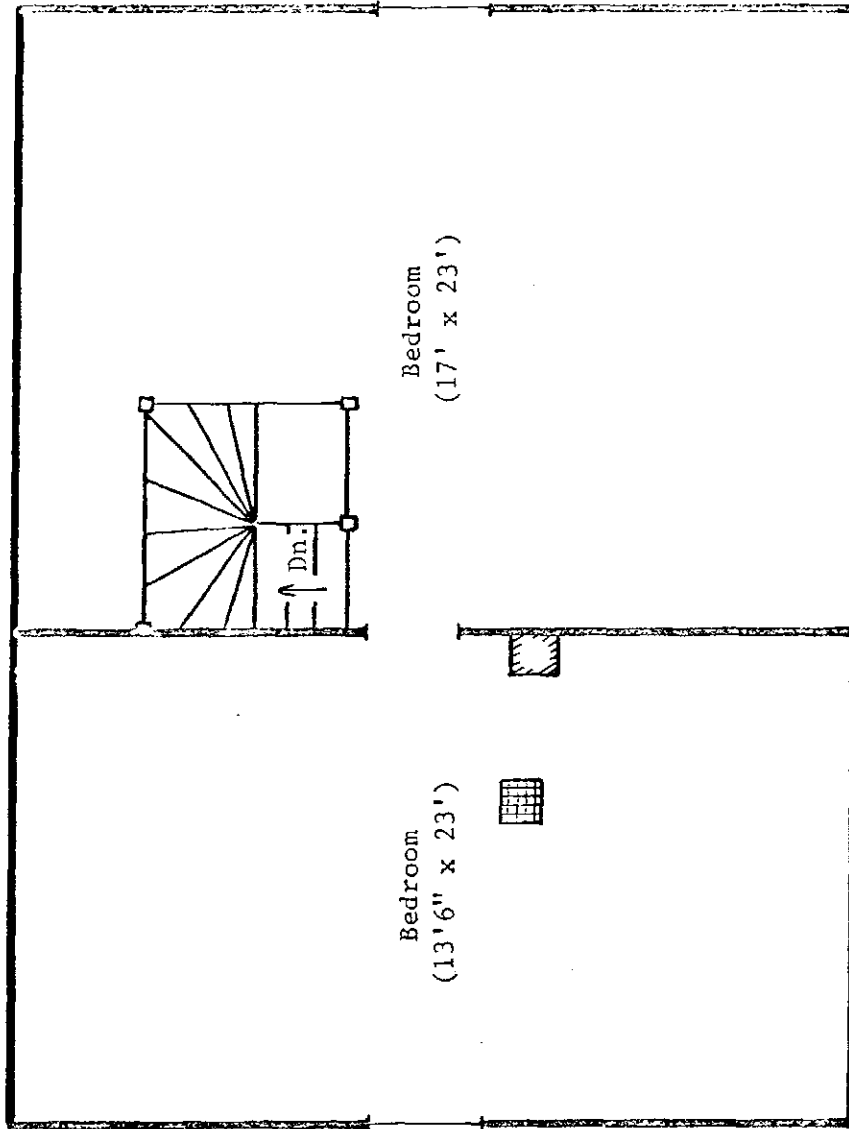
Continued - Chain of Title for Idaho Northern Railroad House

- 1958 Deed 5 May 1958  
Recorded 16 June 1958  
Book 38 Deeds, Instrument #76884  
Edna May Gifford  
to  
Delores M. Jones
- 1978 Deed 21 July 1978  
Deed Instrument # 125093  
Delores M. Hill  
to  
U. S. A.





IDAHO NORTHERN RAILROAD HOUSE - First Floor NA  
approx. 3/16 scale



IDAHO NORTHERN RAILROAD HOUSE - Second Floor  
approx. 3/16 scale  
NA